

**Malays Share Singapore's Progress, Says Lee
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By Tengku Noor Shamsiah Tengku Abdullah**

INGAPORE, Aug 14 (Bernama) -- Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong said today that the Malays have shared in the nation's progress and the government will continue to open up opportunities for them to serve the island state.

He said the Malay community fully shares national concerns and contributes to the solutions.

"This reflects our success at integrating our different communities. I urge community leaders, Malay-Muslim organisations as well as individuals to come forward and continue working with me and my team, especially the Malay MPs.

"Together we can work on national and community issues, and achieve a better future for all of us," he said at the National Day rally at the University Cultural Centre, National University of Singapore.

Lee said that political, community, and religious leaders have set the right tone, building closer ties and fostering understanding between communities.

He said the Malay-Muslim community has shown that it is not mutually exclusive for a good Muslim to be a good Singaporean.

"We have increased mutual trust and confidence in handling sensitive issues. All groups understand the need for give and take and mutual accommodation in our multi-racial society," he said.

The prime minister said that small but growing numbers of Malays at the top are reaching new heights of excellence in the professions and other fields.

He said they are winning scholarships, excelling in national examinations, and holding key posts in the public and private sectors.

"We are all proud of their achievements," he said, adding that he wants to see more young Malays seize the opportunities open to them and do well.

"This requires hard work, but as many of you have shown, you can do it," he said.

Lee said the government will continue to create opportunities for all Singaporeans to excel.

"We will continue to open opportunities for Malays to serve the nation, and enable the community to contribute to and participate fully in Singapore's development and progress," he said.

The prime ministers regards the Malays as a successful "Community of Excellence" and a working model of a moderate Muslim minority that has progressed together with the nation.

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